

Introduction

Philosophy/ Basis

This report is a record of the study of the uses and alternatives explored in arriving at a recommendation for the appropriate treatment of the buildings in the West Barracks. The document defines the most beneficial treatments and uses for the buildings. It is meant to be a compliance document and guideline for the development of the buildings. The recommendations were made based on several elements, primarily the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Other important components included the character-defining features and the physical condition of the building. The place of the building within the West Barracks and Fort Vancouver National Reserve, physically and culturally, was also taken into account.

Procedure

Conditions Assessment

The physical condition of each building was investigated in the field. The information collected was compiled into a matrix for each building, including the interior and exterior, broken down by room or by elevation, by feature and by system, with location and material description of the individual elements being evaluated.

First a significance rating was assigned to each item as 'Significant', 'Contributing', or 'Non-contributing'. 'Significant' is a label assigned to a feature that is original historical material which would be difficult or prohibitively expensive to re-create or duplicate and is a character-defining feature of the building. 'Contributing' is a term applied to those items that are contributing to the general historical character of the building but could be re-created or duplicated easily. 'Non-contributing' describes an item that dates subsequent to the period of significance and does not contribute to the character of the building.

Secondly, a condition rating is assigned to each material as 'Good', 'Fair', and 'Poor'. 'Good' is a material that is in a condition that would require little or no maintenance or repair. 'Fair' is applied to a material that would require more repair and maintenance but is still fundamentally sound and would not require replacement as a whole. 'Poor' is used for materials or features which would require replacement of the material with new or extensive repairs. Some materials have two ratings. This indicates that the condition of the material varies throughout the feature. Some portions may require replacement while others just need repair. Repair should be undertaken if the goal is to retain as much historical material as possible, or if cost is an issue. If it is not then replacement should be followed.

Thirdly, a repair rating is assigned to some elements, not all, to indicate the level of repair required. 'Minor' indicates that the material is repairable. 'Major' indicates that the material will need replacement and extensive repair. In some cases a percentage is given, particularly with a surface material like siding or plaster, that indicates the percentage of the material that needs repair. More specific or detailed information is provided for a feature or element in the comments section. First pass recommendations regarding code or repair issues are also written here. Full Conditions Assessments on each building in matrix form are included in Appendix A.

Writing/ Research

The report is based on the conditions assessment and existing maintenance documents from the Army Corps of Engineers, Physical History Reports and the Historic Structures Report Part 1: Historical Background and Context from the National Park Service, among other resources.

Task One

For each building there is a description of the structure and its context within the West Barracks and the Reserve as a whole. This is followed by a description of the vehicular and pedestrian access that focuses on the location and then the condition of existing circulation.

The next section deals with the exterior assessment, giving a general description of the conditions found and causes of deterioration. It is broken up by element starting at the ground level with the immediate site and moves by element up to the roof.

The interior assessment is a general description for smaller buildings. For larger buildings some rooms are broken out to have their own assessment if the conditions differ from the typical found. Electrical and Mechanical assessments are included in this section.

Task Two

This section deals with the Ultimate Treatment that is developed within the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, cultural resource, historic integrity, and the character-defining features in mind and finally the existing physical condition. Here it is indicated which type of treatment is recommended and is generally either restoration or rehabilitation. Sometimes the treatment type differs between the interior of the building and the exterior. The exterior recommendations address each element as the assessment did. The recommendations for the interior then follow. The proposed use comes from the West Vancouver Barracks Reuse Plan and is illustrated by plan sketches. The plan sketches are suggestions only and are meant to illustrate the recommendations made in the report.

Task Three

The third section reviews the building with a code analysis based upon the treatment and the suggested use in section two. Code review is done for the treatment and use proposed in Task Two. It is evaluated in terms of life safety, fire protection, energy conservation, abatement of hazardous materials, and universal accessibility.

Task Four

The last section offers an alternative treatment to the one suggested in Task Two if the first treatment should impact the significant historical integrity of the building. These are also supplemented by plan sketches and class 'C' cost estimates.

Treatment suggestions are made in regard to the proposed uses in the context of the physical conditions of the building, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, and the governing applicable codes.

